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31 March 2011

Mr G Thomas  
Headteacher  
Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School  
Wexham Road  
Slough  
Berkshire  
SL2 5JW

Dear Mr Gareth Thomas

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School**

Following my visit with Atifa Sayani, Additional Inspector, to your school on 29 and 30 March 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – **satisfactory**.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – **satisfactory**.

No newly qualified teachers are to be appointed without the consent of the lead inspector.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of the governing body, the Director of Children's Services for Slough and the Association of Muslim Schools (ams:uk)

Yours sincerely

Susan Gadd  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010**

- By September 2011, raise pupils' attainment and achievement in English, mathematics and science to nationally expected levels in Years 3 to 6 by: improving teaching so that it is consistently good or better and promotes better progress in learning; using assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lesson and good challenge for all pupils in learning; using assessment information and better marking to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve.
- Improve leadership and management by developing sharper and more rigorous monitoring to evaluate the quality of teaching.
- By June 2011, put in place effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least average compared to all primary schools.
- By June 2011, improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by ensuring adequate opportunities are provided for all pupils to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Iqra Slough Islamic Primary School**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 29–30 March 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited 15 lessons and scrutinised documents and pupils' work. They also met with the interim headteacher and other staff, including members of the senior and middle management team, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the last visit the school has undergone significant staff changes. The school is no longer in a soft federation and the previous executive headteacher is no longer working with the school. Two previous seconded senior leaders have also left the school. Instead a new interim headteacher, one interim assistant headteacher and one permanent assistant headteacher have been appointed along with one education consultant. The senior and middle leadership team has been completely restructured and the governing body has some new members. Four members of staff have left the school and are now being covered by long-term supply teachers.

#### **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

##### **Key findings since the last monitoring visit**

- Children in Early Years Foundation Stage continue to make generally satisfactory progress in lessons. However, the school's own data indicate that the profiles are inconsistent between the three classes and has rightly identified the need to re-assess the evidence gathered in this part of the school so that profiles accurately reflect children's achievements.
- In Key Stage 1, lesson observations indicate that progress in lessons has improved significantly, although it is inconsistent between classes at times. This picture of progress is reflected in the school's own internal data. Current attainment in Year 2 is on track to be broadly average.
- In Key Stage 2, lesson observations show pupils are beginning to make more rapid progress. However, this improved rate of progress in lessons has not been taking place long enough for there to be a consistent impact on pupil progress over time. Where teaching is at its strongest, some pupils are beginning to make good progress in this part of the school. As in Key Stage 1, the school's internal data since January 2011 reflect the progress seen in lessons. However, the current data on science are not reliable enough to assess progress in science. Lesson observations and book scrutiny indicate that progress in science has accelerated, although it remains inconsistent.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- By September 2011, raise pupils' attainment and achievement in English, mathematics and science to nationally expected levels in Years 3 to 6 by: improving teaching so that it is consistently good or better and promotes better progress in learning; using assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lesson and good challenge for all pupils in learning and by using assessment information and better marking to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve – **satisfactory**.

## Other relevant pupil outcomes

### Key findings since the last monitoring visit

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and appreciate the changes to the school environment. The behaviour policy has changed again and the impact of this is seen through the improved behaviour in the vast majority of classrooms. Most pupils are now actively engaged in their learning and behaviour is beginning to support this learning.
- Attendance has continued to improve. It varies from low to broadly average, depending on the time of year. A new team has been established to encourage attendance which includes a home link worker who is able to communicate with parents and carers in their native language. This has helped to strengthen relationships between the school and parents and encourage more regular attendance. The current level of attendance since the beginning of this academic year is low; however, in comparison to this time last year there is clear evidence of steady improvement.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- By June 2011, put in place effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least average compared to all primary schools – **satisfactory**.

## The effectiveness of provision

### Key findings since the last monitoring visit

- The quality of teaching and assessment has improved significantly. Despite small pockets of inadequate teaching remaining within the school, this is no longer representative of most lessons. Higher expectations have

been set to ensure pupils make rapid progress in lessons. Lesson plans are consistently used across the whole school and most planning identifies the needs of different groups of pupils. However, at times differentiation remains too broad to meet the specific needs of individuals.

- The vast majority of teachers make reference to the learning objectives at the beginning of lessons and provide pupils with clear success criteria by which to assess their own learning. The school recognises that it now needs to ensure that pupils have an opportunity to formally assess their own learning and that differentiation becomes more sharply linked to pupils' national curriculum levels during all parts of the lesson. In the best lessons good opportunities exist for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through the use of group work and 'talk partners'. Although the use of teaching assistants has improved, it still remains inconsistent, particularly in the introductions to lessons.
- An impressive improvement is the detailed marking in some literacy books and the number of pupils who understand their current national curriculum levels as well as being able to talk about how to improve their writing through their targets. This good practice is more embedded in literacy than in mathematics.
- Since January 2011 the school has developed a secure baseline to assess pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 2. External verification through marking along with internal moderation and book scrutiny mean that the school is now well placed to assess pupils' progress according to a more robust baseline. The school is in the process of planning further external moderation to ensure that current assessments are as accurate as those made in January. Teachers have begun the process of assessing pupils against national curriculum levels and require further training to ensure that their assessments of pupils are accurate and consistent across subjects and the school.
- The school acknowledges that curriculum development has been limited because of the sharp focus on improving the quality of teaching and assessment. As a result of a review to the curriculum the school is currently using the qualification and curriculum authority guidance documents as an interim measure to ensure that all subjects receive the appropriate coverage. Skills in information and communication technology, literacy, numeracy and science are taught as separate subjects, with limited opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in a variety of contexts. Plans are in place to introduce the international primary curriculum to begin addressing these issues. School day trips are now planned on a regular basis to support the learning taking place in the classroom. Children continue to enjoy the after-school clubs and more recently a 'Pyramid club' has been introduced to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The school now recognises that it needs to build a curriculum that caters for the varying needs of pupils as well as providing pupils with an opportunity to embed their basic skills in a variety of contexts.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- By June 2011, improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by ensuring adequate opportunities are provided for all pupils to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology – **inadequate**.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

### **Key findings since the last monitoring visit**

- The interim headteacher provides very strong leadership, with a relentless drive and determination to rapidly address past inadequacies. Together with the new senior leadership team they have been very focused in making rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and assessment. They provide strong guidance to all staff.
- The 'Raising Attainment Plan' (RAP) is detailed and provides clear success criteria by which all school staff and governors are able to measure the success of their actions. Since January 2011 over one hundred lesson observations have taken place involving leaders at various levels. Consequently, there is a strong trend of improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and pupil behaviour. Accurate assessments as a result of external marking have been established and detailed tracking documents are in place to identify underachieving pupils. A range of interventions are now being used to target these pupils. Teachers along with their year leaders now have discussions to identify what additional interventions are required to support underachieving pupils. These changes are relatively new and it is too early to measure the full impact on pupil outcomes
- Middle leaders have been appointed and have received the opportunity to attend training on middle management courses. They are at the early stages of monitoring and analysing the impact of their work. The challenge to the school now lies in ensuring that the majority of pupils begin to make accelerated progress more consistently to remedy past underachievement.
- The governing body have a strong understanding of the school's areas for development and continue to firmly hold the school to account. They have worked closely with the new leadership team and regularly hold meetings on the areas identified in their last inspection. Link governors meet with subject leaders and review the progress made in curriculum areas. The new RAP is providing to be a valuable tool in measuring the progress that the school is making and enabling governors to ask challenging questions of their senior leadership team. Potential safeguarding areas identified in the last visit have been addressed. Succession planning has already started in order to appoint a substantive headteacher and senior

leadership team and to consider how best to provide consistency between the outgoing and incoming teams.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership and management by developing sharper and more rigorous monitoring to evaluate the quality of teaching – **satisfactory**.

### **External support**

- Since the original statement of action the local authority capacity to support the school has changed as a result of significant staff reductions. Since the last monitoring visit the support plan has been re-written focusing on monitoring the implementation of the school's own RAP and drawing on commissioned external support as necessary to directly support the school. Some appropriate support has been provided such as an English advisor to develop literacy, regular meetings with the education welfare officer and a new contact person for weekly progress meetings. In February some financial support was provided in relation to the appointment of external consultants. However, other support has been intermittent owing to changes in staffing. The impact of the support in attendance has led to positive outcomes but the impact of other direct interventions has yet to be determined.